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President:	Ms. Dlamini Zuma/Mr. Kumalo	(South Africa)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Belle
	China	Mr. Du Xiaocong
	Congo	Mr. Ikouebe
	France	Ms. Rouillard
	Ghana	Mr. Christian
	Indonesia	Mr. Budiman
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Panama	Mr. Suescum
	Peru	Mr. Gallardo
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Nasser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Smirnov
	Slovakia	Mr. Mlynár
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Moir
	United States of America	Ms. Wolcott Sanders

Agenda

Relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in the maintenance of international peace and security

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The meeting was suspended at 1.15 p.m. and resumed at 3.10 p.m.

The President: I wish to remind all speakers, as was indicated at the morning session, to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously.

I call on the representative of Norway.

Mr. Løvald (Norway): Norway welcomes the increased collaboration between the United Nations and regional organizations. We are ourselves taking part in the international peacekeeping efforts of the United Nations and NATO in the Balkans and in Afghanistan, and we are working with the European Union (EU) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which continue to play very significant roles in the Balkans as well.

Norway believes that possible contributions by regional and subregional organizations should always be considered when planning new peacekeeping operations. In order to streamline such cooperation, there seems to be a need for the United Nations to set common standards and to establish a better framework for entering into new agreements.

Africa has seen a number of violent conflicts. These have seriously hampered development, caused severe destruction and human suffering, and led to instability and the dislocation of large groups of people. We have also seen how African leaders increasingly have taken responsibility for preventing conflicts and building peace.

In West Africa, peace has been achieved through active cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Norway sees ECOWAS as an important factor in the building of peace and security. In Burundi, the phasing and coordination of African Union (AU) and United Nations peacekeeping operations has proved the potential of increased collaboration between United Nations and regional organizations.

The African Union and its mechanisms for peace and security, especially its Commission, the Peace and Security Council and the African standby force, can play a very important part. Through the AU, African countries are currently responding to the challenges of Darfur and Somalia. The international community must stand by the AU in its pioneering efforts to achieve peace through complex operations that present great challenges.

Norway is committed to supporting the United Nations in Darfur. We strongly urge the Sudan to accept the United Nations support package to the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS). The situation is critical. The Norwegian Government is extremely concerned about the humanitarian and human rights situation in Darfur.

We are now also in a critical phase with regard to Somalia. There is a chance for peace and stability, but the country could also very easily slide back into lawlessness. It is therefore crucial that in this situation the international community stand and act together.

The establishment of the African standby force is at an early stage. Intensive work is under way to build capacity and develop doctrines and appropriate command and control systems for the force to be operational by 2010. The African mission in Darfur has revealed many challenges and underlines the need for close cooperation between the AU and the international community through the United Nations.

According to the United Nations Charter, the United Nations has obligations that go far beyond the maintenance of peace and security, one of the most prominent of which is the promotion of respect for human rights. We should discuss how cooperation between the United Nations and the AU can further contribute to the promotion of human rights on the continent.

The General Assembly has also agreed that the international community has a responsibility to protect populations from genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity, wherever they may occur. Any United Nations-mandated peace operation has an obligation to promote these common values established by the United Nations.

The African Union has called upon the United Nations to examine the possibility of funding peacekeeping operations undertaken by the African Union or under its authority, through assessed contributions. This is an important discussion. While financing for United Nations-led operations is guaranteed through well-established United Nations mechanisms, funding for regional peacekeeping is ad hoc, not coordinated and depends on donor financing.

When it comes to Darfur and the financing of AMIS, which may be setting a standard for future cooperation, it will be crucial to find a way to ensure that AMIS basic accountability, procurement and managerial standards comply with United Nations rules, particularly in view of the need to secure a funding commitment from the General Assembly's Fifth Committee. There needs to be clarity in command and control. Strong United Nations participation will be important.

Looking to 2010, when the force should be fully operational, it is crucial that the operational principles and doctrines guiding AU peacekeeping missions be closely aligned with United Nations standards. Norway therefore would like to congratulate the Department of Peacekeeping Operations for having established an AU cell to assist the AU and its Peace Support Operations Division with capacity- building for peacekeeping.

Integral to those challenges is the requirement that AU peacekeeping missions be under civilian and political control and that its doctrines enable the AU to undertake multidimensional operations and to muster the capacity to cooperate closely with United Nations humanitarian agencies in the area of operation. Norway is therefore assisting the AU in developing a road map and plan for the establishment of the civilian and police components of the African standby force.

Efforts should be made to establish closer links between the AU Peace and Security Council and the United Nations Security Council. Subregional organizations such as ECOWAS, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) could be better linked up with the peace and security institutions of the AU.

The African Union has taken on a heavy burden with regard to peace and security on the African continent. We believe that it is crucial that African countries themselves take on a leadership role and ownership with regard to managing and resolving African conflicts. We are ready to assist, together with other international partners.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Uruguay.

Mr. Roselli (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, the Uruguyan delegation would like warmly to welcome the initiative taken by your delegation and your country in deciding to convene a debate on this topic so as to hear the opinions of Member States and particularly of the troop-contributing countries, which can bring to this discussion their experiences with the work of regional organizations in the field.

Since the mid-1990s, various observers of the development of peacekeeping missions, including the Secretary-General, have been suggesting that regional organizations should take on greater responsibility in military operations. Those commenting on the situation have felt that highly developed capabilities, such as those of NATO, for instance, might not be necessary in all cases, but that, however, it might be possible to take a few modest steps at the regional level, which could bring about substantial improvement in the capabilities of multinational forces. A very timid attempt was made towards that end, in resolutions 1125 (1997), 1155 (1998) and 1159 (1998), with respect to the situation in the Central African Republic.

What, then, would be the main arguments in favour of greater regionalization of peacekeeping operations?

First, it is within the region itself that the consequences of conflict are felt most immediately. Every day we witness situations that start by affecting one particular State and then spread to the region immediately surrounding it.

Secondly, the States of a region have a better grasp of a conflict situation and its cultural backdrop than do other nations. From a strictly operational point of view, therefore, the States of the region would have greater capacity in the area of information and, eventually, more direct supply lines.

While we certainly believe that it is necessary to continue discussing in various forums, including in the Committee of 34, this new trend towards greater participation by regional organizations in collective peace and security, it is necessary to consider possible points of contention in the context of the implementation of a tangible mechanism aimed at making regional organizations the main protagonists in the conflicts that arise in each region. In order to take decisions on the expansion of those competencies, certain principles relating to peacekeeping operations — and most important, certain provisions of the United Nations Charter — must be strictly adhered to.

First of all we must highlight the different ways the Charter applies to the subject, depending on whether it is Chapters VI and VII or Chapter VIII that is being implemented. In our view, under Chapter VII of the Charter, it is very difficult to maintain forces made up solely of regional contingents. In principle, we must recall that peacekeeping operations are an effective way for the Organization to achieve its fundamental purpose: the maintenance of international peace and security through the adoption of effective collective measures to achieve that objective. That purpose is set out in the Preamble of the Charter, which states clearly the decision to "unite our strength to maintain international peace and security".

Paragraph 5 of Article 2 of the Charter establishes the obligation of all Members to provide every assistance in any action taken in accordance with the Charter. The action is collective, and thus, all share the obligation, under equal conditions. That framework for action will ensure that the rule is applied properly and, ultimately, that the action is legitimate.

Another point that must be discussed is the impartiality of such a force. If Chapter VII were applied solely through regional forces, that might infringe the principle of equitable geographical representation. Along with the requirement that United Nations forces be as representative as possible, one of the traditional principles of peacekeeping is that States involved in resolving a conflict should not have tangible interests or private agendas in the process.

Participation under Chapter VII, with military forces made up solely of regional protagonists, might also distort the financial dimensions of an operation. In addition, there could be increasing problems with equipping and training contingents, as not all regional organizations have similar economic or technological capabilities. Moreover, there is a need for special coordination between the various levels of authority of the United Nations and of the regional organizations — which may vary depending on their sphere of action: military, development, cooperation or assistance. While there is a correct application of the Chapter VIII machinery, especially as set out in Articles 53 and 54 of the Charter, we could envisage implementation of collective security operations through regional organizations alone. Without prejudice to this, it will always be necessary to assess the true capacity of the various regional organizations with respect to peace and security in conflicts in the area in question.

There is an example of participation by regional countries that is close to the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States: our sister Republic of Haiti. Within the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), we have a large contingent from regional countries alongside contingents from other friendly countries from other regions. We think that interaction between the various participants does not detract from the importance of the presence of regional States. The region's international organizations — notably the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Development Bank — have contributed valuable experience in peace and security operations and post-conflict reconstruction, along with their active participation in development projects.

We believe that this experience is highly relevant and can serve as a guide for further discussions within the Security Council on the eventual implementation of practical participation by regional organizations in tasks related to the maintenance of international peace and security.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Uganda.

Mr. Butagira (Uganda): On behalf of the Uganda delegation, I would like to thank the South African delegation for organizing this important debate.

The African Union (AU) is increasingly engaged in efforts to promote peace and stability on the African continent, including the pacific settlement of disputes, thus contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security. Quite often, enforcement action is needed. Hence the cooperation envisaged under Chapter VIII of the Charter between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular where enforcement action is required.

However, the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security lies with the Security Council under Article 24 of the Charter. It follows, therefore, that any derogations under Chapter VIII of the Charter do not mean abdication of responsibility by the Security Council. That point is important, especially when considering the financing of any operations undertaken by the African Union or through Member States. The important thing to consider here is how to finance operations undertaken by the African Union on behalf of the Security Council or with authorization of the Council.

The peace operations undertaken by the African Union can take various forms. For instance, the African Union may be mandated by the Security Council, as is the case with AU peacekeeping operations in Somalia under Security Council resolution 1744 (2007), or the Security Council may reinforce or take over a mission initiated by States members of the African Union, as was the case in Burundi. Either way, the United Nations should find ways and means of financing such peacekeeping operations.

I would suggest setting up a fund on the lines of the Central Emergency Response Fund for humanitarian activities, whereby voluntary contributions could be made, in addition to contributions from the United Nations system. Such a fund would be utilized to finance peacekeeping operations undertaken by the African Union. The fund could be augmented by providing a budget line in the regular budget of the United Nations. The fund could be jointly operated by the African Union and the United Nations.

Other areas of cooperation can include the United Nations contribution to enhance the capacity of the early warning mechanism set up in Addis Ababa by the African Union. An intelligence fusion cell on the lines of the Tripartite Plus One Commission in the Great Lakes region could be set up in the early warning unit in Addis Ababa. Other areas of cooperation could also include the supply of equipment and other logistical support to AU peacekeeping operations, including strengthening the capacity of the African Union standby force. Uganda, as my President has often said, believes that African problems should be owned by Africans and should have an African solution. That is why we emphasize strengthening the capacity of African Union forces.

Very often conflicts are a result of poverty. Hence, there is a need to strengthen economic partnership between the AU and the United Nations through mechanisms, such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development, aimed at poverty eradication in States members of the African Union.

Finally, the African Union stands ready to cooperate with the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security, as evidenced by the Declaration on Enhancing United Nations-African Union Cooperation, signed in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 16 November 2006 between the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union, and various Security Council presidential statements and General Assembly resolutions.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Namibia.

Mr. Shiweva (Namibia): My delegation is pleased to see you, Mr. President, at the helm of the Security Council during this month. I join others in congratulating you on your presidency and commend you for inviting Member States to deliberate the very important issue of the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in the maintenance of international peace and security. This debate will offer us an opportunity to exchange views and devise ways to best enhance regional organizations and their capability to address issues related to peace and security within their respective regions, particularly in Africa.

My delegation would like to commend you, Mr. President, for the concept paper with which you have provided us in preparation for this debate. We share many of the sentiments expressed in the concept paper. In our view, it is a good basis for our deliberations today.

The United Nations plays an important role in legitimizing international action, including action taken by and through regional organizations. The Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change underscored that the ability of the Security Council to become more proactive in preventing and responding to threats will be strengthened by making full and more productive use of Chapter VIII provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. During the September 2005 World Summit, regional organizations were identified as one of the contributors to the overall efforts in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Namibia recognizes that there has been a surge in demand for peacekeeping operations, particularly in Africa. As we speak, there are over six peacekeeping missions in Africa and this number is likely to increase as new missions are likely to be launched.

With this understanding in mind, it makes sense to deliberate on how the relationship between the African Union and the United Nations could be strengthened in order to enhance Africa's capability to resolve these conflicts.

My delegation is fully aware that the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security lies with the Security Council. Regional organizations like the African Union can play a complementary role in support of the United Nations. The United Nations can derive maximum benefit from cooperating with regional organizations if the capacities of such organizations are strengthened. At the same time, their operational linkages should be streamlined and formalized. These linkages could be further augmented by developing common doctrine, standards and procedures for the joint planning and management of peacekeeping operations. Furthermore, the establishment of a framework for making practical cooperation operational through effective coordination mechanisms and measures that would replace the current ad hoc arrangements is essential.

To this end, my delegation welcomes the recent signing of the United Nations-African Union Joint Declaration, entitled "Enhancing United Nations-African Union Cooperation: Framework for the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union". In the same vein, we appreciate that a multidisciplinary African Union peacekeeping support team has been established within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to serve as a coordination point for all issues related to cooperation with the African Union.

While capacity-building for the African Union is undoubtedly crucial in ensuring effective conduct and management of peacekeeping operations, it is important that the provision of logistical and financial resources to facilitate a rapid deployment capability is seriously taken into consideration. That could be done by establishing a mechanism that would make it possible for African Union-led operations with the consent of the United Nations to be funded by the United Nations in a predictable manner. These operations, despite their legitimacy, cannot simply be left to the mercy of voluntary contributions by development partners and donors. While these partners and donors have done a tremendous job in financing such operations, it is our conviction that the United Nations should take over that responsibility which, to our mind, falls within its purview.

The African Union and the subregional organizations in Africa have often undertaken peacekeeping operations with the consent of the United Nations but without any assurance from the United Nations that such missions would be transformed into United Nations peacekeeping missions within a given time frame. That tends to put a lot of pressure on such organizations by forcing them to continue to run such missions with limited logistical and financial resources.

In order to alleviate this problem, it is critically important for the United Nations and the African Union to enter into an agreement that would clearly stipulate that any peacekeeping operations led by the African Union or other subregional organization, with the consent of the United Nations, would be transformed into a United Nations mission within a defined time frame, preferably six months.

In conclusion, it is important to point out that, given the multiplicity of stakeholders involved in supporting African capacity-building, there is a need to ensure that the African Union takes the lead in effective coordination of such support to avoid duplication.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Oshima (Japan): The Japanese delegation welcomes the timely holding of this important debate today and expresses its appreciation to the delegation of South Africa for the initiative taken.

In many regions of the world, regional organizations are strengthening their capabilities, including in the area of peace and security, and their relationships with the United Nations are entering a new stage of collaboration and cooperation, especially in Africa. Regional organizations obviously benefit from their closer knowledge of the region, which allows them to play an essential role in influencing the prevention of conflicts and the resolution of problems.

We have already burgeoning examples of developments in complementary cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, notably in Africa. We are witnessing a growing body of practices where such a development in cooperation and partnership is contributing to an effective maintenance of international peace and security, in particular in the fields of conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

At the same time, it is clear that there is still much room for further thought and action if the international community is to fully realize the

advantages to be derived from effective implementation of provisions envisaged in Chapter VIII of the Charter. The challenges now laid before the Security Council in, for example, Darfur and Somalia, in terms of how best the United Nations can support regional initiatives relevant to these conflicts, demonstrate the importance of addressing this matter with some urgency.

The efforts employed by African States for developing the increasingly vibrant and action-oriented African Union, and the other subregional organizations, merit our praise and support. In Africa, the African Union (AU) and a host of subregional organizations have come to play crucial roles in conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding in recent years. Africa is unquestionably at the forefront of the regional initiatives in these areas and should rightly be so. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has played a vital role recently in conflict prevention in Guinea. The African Union has its AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS) deployed in Darfur, and the AU Observer Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) is beginning to be deployed. The AU Task Force in Burundi is providing the necessary conditions for the peacebuilding activities in the country. Those are but a few examples of the ongoing African regional initiatives and leadership through regional and subregional organizations. We highly commend all such activities as a sign of accelerating African regional ownership.

On the other hand, the challenges facing Africa are complex and diverse. A matter of central importance in facing those challenges is to establish and strengthen interactive relationships between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations.

While both the United Nations and the AU should tackle the immediate challenges by taking appropriate measures on a case-by-case basis, it would be worthwhile from a longer-term perspective to give careful study to several questions. First, what are the conditions and modalities for assisting AU peace support missions? Secondly, how could the two organizations develop more effective cooperation in conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities? Thirdly, how can the United Nations Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council best interact? Fourthly, is there any way to ensure effective use of the provisions in Chapter VIII of the Charter so that the interactive relationships are firmly anchored, backed by the broad support of the membership?

The concept paper for this debate prepared by the presidency (S/2007/148) provides a useful basis for further discussion, and we thank the delegation of South Africa for it. With respect to providing political, physical and financial assistance to AU peace support missions, we believe that the Security Council should make decisions on a case-by-case basis, based on all general principles governing United Nations peacekeeping operations and taking fully into account the independence and accountability of each organization.

In addition to the aforementioned issues, which will require further discussion, measures to address capacity-building for the African Union and the subregional organizations, including enhancing the capacities of their respective secretariats, require urgent attention so as to assist them in their operations to deploy missions in the field.

In this connection, we commend the African Union for its efforts to establish the capability to operationalize the African Standby Force and to integrate the New Partnership for Africa's Development into the AU. We also welcome the fact that, in consultation with the AU secretariat, the Secretary-General and his team have been developing a framework for the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union, which resulted in the adoption last year of a declaration between the two organs and an action plan for United Nations assistance to building the AU peacekeeping capacity. Dialogue and coordination between the United Nations and the AU are essential, and we thus appreciate the very close daily communication and coordination efforts by the two secretariats. We encourage the continuation of such positive developments.

Japan has supported the efforts and activities of the African Union and of the subregional organizations through a variety of measures, including financial support, and is willing to increase its support further. Japan has been providing financial assistance to the AU, ECOWAS and the Southern African Development Community, for example. Its support for the AU activities in Darfur totals approximately $8.7 million, and it provided $2 million for the reintegration project in the Great Lakes region in 2006.

Japan's commitment to supporting the key concept and practice of African ownership is enshrined in a number of documents, including those produced in the course of the G8 summits, the most recent example of which is the "Update on Africa" issued at the St. Petersburg summit last year. We would also like to note that the Government of Japan will organize the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV) in the first half of next year. TICAD IV will certainly contribute to nurturing the partnership between the international community and African countries.

We fully share the belief in the importance of building on today's discussion, which has yielded a number of useful ideas and food for thought, in an effort to seek a more effective and efficient relationship between the United Nations and the African Union. Based on our continued strong commitment to Africa, we are prepared to be constructive in such endeavours.

In this respect, I would like to offer my delegation's support for the draft presidential statement to be issued after today's debate.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Australia.

Mr. Hill (Australia): We congratulate South Africa for initiating this important debate.

It goes without saying that the United Nations, and particularly the Security Council, plays a vital role in the maintenance of international peace and security. But the United Nations cannot and does not provide assistance to every State threatened by conflict or instability.

Rightly, there is a growing recognition among States of the important contribution regional organizations and arrangements can make to the maintenance of international peace and security. Given the shared responsibilities and interwoven interests of their member States, regional organizations and arrangements are often uniquely placed to respond to challenges to regional peace and security. Their efforts should be complementary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations and, as is proper, are often undertaken in close cooperation with the United Nations.

But there remains scope to enhance interaction between the United Nations and regional organizations and arrangements. Australia welcomes regular dialogue between the United Nations and regional organizations and arrangements, including exchanges of information to avoid duplication of effort, sharing of operational experiences, joint training and personnel exchanges.

Efforts by the United Nations and regional organizations and arrangements to maintain international peace and security must be complementary and be based on an assessment of comparative advantage. The United Nations and regional organizations should share experiences and lessons learned, not only concerning how to end conflict, but also concerning how to prevent conflict. Together, we must develop more proactive strategies for heading off the likely emergence, or often the re-emergence, of conflict.

Australia has played an active role in leading regional responses in our own region — in East Timor, Bougainville, Fiji and the Solomon Islands. Participation of regional States, together with United Nations endorsement and involvement, helps to ensure the legitimacy of these operations and continued regional support.

For example, the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) has assumed a leading role in efforts to return Fiji to democracy, consistent with the Nasonini Declaration on Regional Security adopted by Pacific Island Forum leaders in August 2002. That Declaration committed PIF States to act collectively in response to security challenges, including the adverse effects of globalization such as transnational crimes, and unlawful challenges to national integrity and independence.

As a further example, all 16 members of the PIF have committed personnel to the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI). At their most recent meeting, in Nadi in October 2006, PIF leaders agreed it was important for RAMSI to continue, acknowledging the strong contribution it has made to the restoration of security, governance and rehabilitation of the economy of the Solomon Islands. Endorsement by the United Nations and the Commonwealth Secretariat demonstrated the wider level of international support for RAMSI.

In these and other examples, the contribution and participation of regional personnel result in a level of ownership and belief in what are regional solutions to regional problems. The engagement of regional States

to resolve a regional conflict helps to ensure appropriate treatment of cultural sensitivities on the ground, as neighbouring States are often more familiar with the cultural context in which they operate.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum (ARF) is the Asia-Pacific's primary and most inclusive forum for multilateral security dialogue and cooperation. Australia is currently promoting within the ARF civilian-to-military and military-to-military cooperation on disaster relief. We plan to co-host with Indonesia in early 2008 an ARF exercise to develop standard operating procedures for use in regional disaster response. Australia strongly supports collaboration between the United Nations and the ARF. We co-hosted with Malaysia the inaugural ARF Peacekeeping Experts Meeting in Malaysia in March 2007, at which the Deputy Chief of the Integrated Training Service of the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations presented the keynote address.

In this context of our own extensive involvement in regional organizations and arrangements in the Asia-Pacific, Australia warmly welcomes the African Union's commitment to assist in the resolution of African conflicts. We applaud the AU's significant role in efforts to resolve a number of serious conflicts, including through mediation and the provision of peacekeeping forces in Burundi, Darfur and, now, Somalia.

The AU should be a priority partner for the Security Council. Cooperation between the United Nations and the AU should continue to be enhanced, including through the provision of capacity-building support. Individual States and other regional organizations can also help to build AU capacity, which will be to the benefit of us all. In today's globalized world, peace and security in any one continent has flow-on benefits.

Australia looks forward to working with the United Nations and other States to share our experiences and lessons learned in helping regions to manage their conflicts and to explore ways in which the United Nations can support regional organizations and arrangements. We encourage further interaction among the Secretariat, regional organizations and arrangements and relevant States to develop those mechanisms.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

Mr. Elgannas (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to congratulate you, Sir, and the members of your delegation, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I am also grateful to you for having organized this meeting, which is devoted to a subject of great importance, especially for Africa: the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, with a view to maintaining international peace and security. This is testimony to your great skill in guiding our work.

This meeting is in keeping with the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, which reaffirmed the importance of strengthening the relationship between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, as provided for under Chapter VIII of the Charter. We fully agree that, as stated in this and earlier meetings, there is a need to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in the area of the maintenance of international peace and security, particularly as it relates to conflict prevention and management and to peace consolidation.

We believe that if regional organizations played a greater role in the maintenance of international peace and security, there would be two main outcomes. First, there would be a reduced burden on the Security Council in the carrying out of its mission, namely, maintaining international peace and security. Secondly, the legitimacy of the Council's missions would be increased if regional organizations participated in the decision-making process and in deliberations.

If such cooperation was carried out on an institutional basis, it would lead to greater interaction among the various entities and to a sharing of efforts and experience, which would yield positive results in areas of conflict and tension. Such cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations must be based on the harmonization of objectives and a complementarity of efforts if we are to confront the major challenges to peace and security in conflict areas. There can be no question of eliminating the regional role so as to replace it with an international role. That, at least, is how we understand the cooperation agreement signed last November between

the African Union and the United Nations at Addis Ababa.

We have great hopes for the cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union with a view to resolving the problem of Darfur in a way that takes account of local and regional elements of the problem and the principles of the sovereignty of States and non-interference in the internal affairs of countries, while avoiding unilateral positions.

We support cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union in this respect. However, we reaffirm that such cooperation should not be based solely on the distribution of resources and the granting of executive capacity to regional organizations. It must also take into account national and regional visions, cultural and religious elements, local experience and the history and geography of the region concerned. All of that is essential if we are to be able to restore and maintain peace and security. In this respect, we reaffirm the importance of United Nations support for national and regional initiatives and efforts, which are an essential element when dealing with such conflicts.

We would also like to underline the importance of the summit held in Tripoli last month, which brought together Mr. Omar Hassan Al-Bashir, President of the Sudan, and Mr. Idriss Deby Itno, President of Chad, at the initiative of brotherly Muammar Al-Qadhafi and Mr. Isaias Afwerki, President of Eritrea. That meeting clearly showed the true determination of the leaders to find a peaceful solution to conflicts in the region.

In this respect, I would also like to say that an advisory meeting will be organized on 28 April in order to find a peaceful solution to the problem of Darfur. We have invited Mr. Lam Akol Ajawin, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Sudan, and Mr. Allam-Mi Ahmat, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Chad, to participate in it, together with Mr. Jan Eliasson, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Sudan; Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, African Union Special Envoy for the Darfur Talks; Mr. Andrew Natsios, United States Special Envoy for Darfur; and Mr. Pekka Haavisto, European Union Special Representative for the Sudan. We hope that that meeting will have a fruitful outcome.

We would also like to draw attention to another element among the promising aspects for cooperation that have been agreed to with regard to the consolidation of peace in countries emerging from conflict. These include support by the Peacebuilding Commission for Sierra Leone and Burundi after the two missions in those countries came to an end. We hope that the Peacebuilding Commission will continue to consider other cases that will make it possible to show effective partnership at various levels — local, regional and international.

My country supports the involvement of regional organizations in the efforts of the Peacebuilding Commission and also believes that their participation should be enhanced in meetings relating to a particular country.

The main challenge of cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union is to identify practical and balanced arrangements for such cooperation. We also need to find an institutional methodology that avoids arbitrary actions, thereby leading to better cooperation on a more regular basis in response to the needs of regional organizations so that they and the United Nations can play their role in implementing their joint responsibility for maintaining peace and preventing armed conflict.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Viet Nam.

Mr. Le Luong Minh (Viet Nam): I would like, on behalf of the Vietnamese delegation, to congratulate you, Sir, and South Africa, for your effective leadership of the work of the Council this month.

Chapter VIII of the Charter clearly defines the nature, scope and principles of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. Such cooperation has been further specified in various General Assembly and Security Council resolutions.

More than 60 years have elapsed since the founding of the United Nations, and mankind continues to confront numerous threats to its very survival. More than ever before, the international community shares the pressing need to draw on the resources of regional organizations and arrangements in responding to challenges to regional and international peace and security. Against such a backdrop, as noted by the Secretary-General in his 2006 report on the work of the Organization (A/61/1), there has been a dramatic increase in the range of partnerships between the United Nations and regional organizations in peacekeeping, peacemaking and responding to

humanitarian emergencies, especially since counter-terrorism has recently become another area for meaningful cooperation between these entities. Regional organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Organization of American States, the European Union, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the African Union (AU), in cooperation with the United Nations, have made worthy — while not always successful — contributions to restoring and maintaining peace and security in and among countries in their respective regions. The various resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council on cooperation between the United Nations and specific regional organizations, as well as the holding of summits between the United Nations and those organizations, help to further promote such cooperation.

Since its inception, in 1999, the African Union has persevered in improving its partnership with the United Nations. In tandem with United Nations peacekeeping operations, the AU has contributed proactively to the mediation, reconciliation and reconstruction processes in many countries in the region, such as Angola, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, the Sudan, Uganda and Western Sahara. The AU's efforts and contributions in that connection should be commended.

At the same time, given the many existing challenges of the second-largest and second-most-populous continent, which continues to be torn apart by civil wars, ethnic strife, extreme poverty and humanitarian tragedies, the AU should be playing a greater role. In so doing, it should enjoy greater cooperation from the United Nations, which should respond to its need for the capacity-building of its peacekeeping forces so as to prevent countries in the region from relapsing into protracted conflicts, poverty and marginalization.

Resolution 60/1, adopted by the General Assembly at the 2005 World Summit, encourages and supports the initiatives of the African Union and subregional organizations to prevent, mediate and resolve conflicts with the assistance of the United Nations. Resolution 1631 (2005), adopted by the Security Council in October 2005, while reaffirming the Council's primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, recognizes the growing contributions of regional organizations.

Viet Nam recognizes the urgency of finding lasting solutions to the armed conflicts in Africa, which are depriving many of that continent's peoples of opportunities for much-needed socio-economic development. We support measures to ensure the continuation of emergency humanitarian assistance aimed at relieving the sufferings of the affected populations. We share the hope that, in the implementation of the joint declaration by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Chairperson of the African Union, signed in November 2006, on enhancing the cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union in the area of capacity-building for the next 10 years, new measures will be undertaken to respond more effectively to the needs of peace and security on one of the world's most populous continents.

In Viet Nam's view, peace on a continent such as Africa, long torn apart by protracted conflicts, can prevail only when cooperation and trust prevail. And cooperation and trust are indispensable elements in ensuring the success of discussions and dialogues aimed at achieving such needed measures.

The President: I now call on the representative of Burkina Faso.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): I wish to sincerely congratulate you, Mr. President, on the talent and skill with which the South African presidency has so admirably led the Security Council this month and on the choice of topic that you have put before us today. It is a subject of paramount importance, because African issues are among the Council's top priorities.

Most of the issues that come repeatedly before the Security Council relate to the African continent and countries in conflict, including Côte d'Ivoire, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan-Darfur, or those emerging from conflict, such as Burundi, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The persistence of those conflicts has resulted in the establishment of close institutional cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union.

Thus, the referral and settlement of African conflicts now go through a logical process. It begins with consideration by decision-making bodies at the level of regional organizations and ends with the taking of a final decision by the Security Council. As proof of that, I need only refer to a current event: the political agreement between the Ivorian parties, which was first approved by the Mediation and Security Council of the Economic Community of West African States and then by the African Union Peace and Security Council before being submitted to the United Nations Security Council. So everything is occurring as if the conflict had already been sorted out at the subregional and regional levels. That enables the Security Council, as the final body, to reach a swift and consensual settlement.

Such cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, imposed primarily by needs and circumstances, is the expression of mutual will. Thus, at a meeting in Nairobi in 2004, the Security Council had already insisted on the need for joint efforts between the two organizations to resolve conflicts on the continent and to promote lasting peace, development and stability in Africa. In addition, the Ouagadougou Agreement on Côte d'Ivoire recognizes the Organization's major role in its implementation and in supporting the parties throughout that process and recalls that the role of the Impartial Forces of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire and of Licorne remain essential for completing the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process and for the country's reunification.

In general, cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union takes various forms: technical support, which provides competent and experienced experts and technicians; and logistical support, which provides personnel and equipment, particularly in observation and peacekeeping missions. However, financial support is clearly insufficient; at present, it is virtually non-existent.

The African Union has become an essential partner in managing peace and security on the African continent. It intends to continue to address that challenge. In order to do that, it needs the Security Council's support. Indeed, the United Nations can increase its support for the African Union in its peacekeeping and conflict prevention efforts by strengthening its capacity to guarantee stability in the post-conflict period, by enhancing its political, financial and technical support for the Union, as already recommended in the October 2004 report of the Secretary-General, and by supporting the implementation of the Protocol relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, which seeks to establish an early-warning and security system, particularly by helping the Union to create an African standby force, which would make it possible to react more swiftly.

Moreover, and as noted in the Secretary-General's report dated 13 April 1998 on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, the United Nations could help the African Union develop its capacities for planning, launching and managing operations from its headquarters and could assist the African Union and subregional organizations in strengthening their capacity to control illicit weapons trafficking.

In order to achieve that, the Security Council should first acknowledge that the decisions of regional organizations regarding peacekeeping matters are complementary to its mandate and actions. Regional organizations are closer to the theatres of conflict, have developed their mandates and have strengthened their institutions, thus becoming partners that the Council can no longer continue to ignore on the ground. The Security Council must now permanently make them part of its approach.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Mr. Mahiga (United Republic of Tanzania): The United Republic of Tanzania wishes to congratulate you, Mr. President, and through you the Republic of South Africa, on holding, in a very successful manner, the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March 2007. We thank you very much for organizing this important debate on a subject that is of great significance for the work of this body and of major concern and interest in Africa.

My delegation highly commends the Security Council and the entire United Nations family for having already invested such great energy and resources in an effort to build and develop a systematic and well-coordinated partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union. However, there is still room for improvement.

The objective in all those efforts has been, and essentially remains, to ensure that the framework set and the practices devised contribute to, and reinforce, the cooperation partnership between the world body and regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security in the various regions of the world. In fact, it is to those efforts that we can proudly attribute the success stories of Sierra Leone, Liberia, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Southern Sudan.

There have been previous debates and deliberations in the Security Council as well as in the General Assembly on how to strengthen and deepen the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations — and in particular between the Council and the corresponding organs of regional organizations. Today's debate should promote that effort. I wish to focus on those aspects of cooperation between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union in the areas of conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

First, the newly constituted African Union and the practices of the former Organization of African Unity offer an elaborate architecture and tested ways of conflict prevention, combining formal quiet diplomacy and best practices of wise counselling, peer consultation, mediation and reconciliation. The African Peer Review Mechanism is yet another innovative way to establish norms of cooperation and conflict prevention. The Security Council should take a keen interest in those initiatives and practices in the African continent. Already, there are encouraging signs of support for subregional initiatives — as was the case in the conflicts in Southern Sudan and Somalia, negotiated under the auspices of Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the African Union. The proposed mediation support facility to be established in the Secretariat should be given attention and formal support by the Security Council.

Secondly, in the area of conflict resolution, the partnership between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union has produced visible dividends. The combined moral authority of the two organs, especially when backed by unanimous resolutions, is a powerful message to protagonists in African conflicts. The two councils have evolved a way of sequencing, synchronizing and complementing their decisions to lend maximum effect to the appropriate actions to be taken. However, those political efforts by the two organs are sometimes ad hoc and not timely enough. There is room for periodic consultations, as was the case during the first meeting between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council held in Addis Ababa in June 2006, when the Council visited Eastern Africa, and the second meeting, held in November 2006, again in Addis Ababa, to jointly deliberate on Darfur. The latter led to the signing of a memorandum of understanding and cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union.

Thirdly, peacekeeping probably has the greatest potential for cooperation between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. The African Union has proved to be quick in its deployment, with minimum resources, and has made great contributions in holding conflicts at bay before the United Nations comes in — as was the case in Burundi and in West Africa, where forces of the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group, supported by the African Union, were deployed in Liberia and Sierra Leone ahead of the United Nations peacekeeping missions there. The latest discussions on how to address the Darfur crisis raise new possibilities for strengthening political and technical cooperation for joint deployment in Darfur, with the support of the international community. Understandably, the underlying political issues must still be resolved jointly by the two Councils and Sudan. The latest challenge calling for partnership in Africa is to deploy a peace support mission in Somalia.

Fourthly, peacebuilding falls squarely in areas of interest to both the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council. Post-conflict reconstruction begins when peacekeeping missions are still in place, and in most cases will overlap for some time the mandates of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union in a given post-conflict situation in Africa. There is need and room to strengthen the country configuration of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, with the active participation of the United Nations and the African Union. Successful post-conflict reconstruction is a sure way of not only preventing a relapse into conflict, but also of laying the foundation for sustainable peace, development and the institutionalization of human rights in post-conflict situations in Africa.

We hope that those four areas of cooperation between the two bodies will be reflected in the outcome of this debate and will continue to be the basis of further consultations on strengthening the partnership to promote and maintain international peace and security in the African continent.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Mr. Matussek (Germany): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Serbia, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union has a profound interest in a peaceful, prosperous and democratic Africa. A strong partnership between the United Nations, the African Union and the European Union can contribute significantly to achieving that common aim. Our three organizations are working together closely as facilitators to peace processes and as peacekeepers on the ground. We also strive to achieve sustainable peace and stability in post-conflict situations, such as those in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone and Burundi. At the same time, the EU supports Africa's efforts to strengthen its own capacities in crisis management and post-conflict stabilization.

Let me outline three areas of partnership between the African Union (AU), the United Nations and the EU in which our policies and complementary capacities contribute to peace and security in Africa.

First of all, the European Union is deeply engaged in political efforts to achieve peace and security in Africa. We are playing an active role in efforts to prevent conflicts, settle disputes and consolidate peace and stability. Our special representatives for the Sudan, the African Great Lakes region and the Mano River Union are instrumental in that endeavour. The Special Representative for the African Great Lakes Region, for example, has worked closely with the United Nations and the African Union for 11 years to support lasting peace in the region. He also played a key role in the successful transition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In the Sudan, the Special Representative is supporting the parties in their efforts to achieve a political settlement of the conflict in Darfur, to facilitate the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and to promote South-South dialogue.

In that context, let me say a few words about Darfur. The European Union is deeply concerned about the current security and humanitarian situation. We regret the negative response by the Sudanese Government to the implementation of the United Nations heavy support package for the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) and the deployment of the hybrid operation as agreed upon last year by the United Nations, the African Union and the Sudanese Government itself. The EU calls upon the Sudanese Government to stand by its commitments and to fully cooperate with the United Nations and the AU in establishing an effective peacekeeping presence in Darfur. The EU and its member States committed approximately €400 million for AMIS in Darfur, and we are prepared to provide additional means to uphold the vital presence of AMIS under challenging circumstances.

Secondly, the European Union supports the AU's African Peace and Security Architecture through a wide range of measures. We aim to enhance Africa's peacekeeping capacity, and we warmly welcome similar efforts by the United Nations. The European Development Fund's African Peace Facility remains the main EU source of funding for that support. Based on the principle of African ownership, the Peace Facility has so far supported African peacekeeping in Darfur, the Central African Republic and the Comoros, with €266 million overall. A total of €15 million has now been earmarked for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

The Peace Facility also addresses AU needs in institutional capacity-building. To date, support has been provided for a long-term needs assessment of the AU and subregional organizations, the strengthening of the Peace and Security Department of the AU, and the establishment of an African standby force. A new €20 million programme focussing on the African standby force and capacities at the subregional level is now in the pipeline. The capacities of African subregional organizations in conflict prevention are further supported through substantial regional programmes financed by the European Development Fund.

Tripartite capacity programmes involving the United Nations are being considered, notably in West Africa, involving the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

There is a clear need for sustained and predictable funding for African peacekeeping operations. The EU wishes to point out that while it will consider its role in this endeavour, other donors will also have to contribute significantly in order to ensure an adequate financial basis.

In the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy, the EU has twice supported the United Nations peacekeeping mission in critical phases in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In 2003 we deployed Operation Artemis in Bunia to prevent a humanitarian disaster, and in 2006 the European Union-led force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo assisted the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) during the electoral process. That military support has been complemented, since 2005, by two long-term civilian missions to support security sector reform in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We are now drawing lessons from the EUFOR operation, which will be important for further developing our relationship with the United Nations in the field of crisis management. This increasing cooperation also requires appropriate mechanisms for dialogue and exchange. We will continue to work with the United Nations Secretariat in this regard.

Thirdly, we are greatly interested in strengthening the peacebuilding perspective of cooperation among the EU, the United Nations and the AU. Security and development go hand in hand. Good governance, the rule of law and protection of human rights are elements vital to both conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The European Development Fund will continue to support the needs of its African partners in that respect.

The European Union aims to reinforce the political dialogue with the African Union and subregional organizations. We are therefore working towards a joint EU-African strategy, based on the principles of ownership and mutual accountability, to be adopted by the EU-Africa Summit at Lisbon in December. At the same time, the partnership between the EU and AU Commissions is steadily developing.

Madam President, I would like to thank you for having convened this constructive debate. The European Union is ready to continue to provide its expertise and resources to peace and stability in Africa as a partner of both the United Nations and the AU. Thus we welcome the presidential statement to be adopted today, and we look forward to the report by the Secretary-General.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Benin.

Mr. Ehouzou (Benin) (*spoke in French*): Madam President, I should like to welcome you to New York in the context of this debate. I should like to congratulate you most warmly on your country's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. The subject matter of today's public debate is extremely topical. Benin, my country, made this issue one of its priorities during its term in the Council, in 2004-2005. It is another African country — South Africa — that has put this issue once again at the centre of the Council's concerns. My delegation welcomes this.

Benin was one of the authors of the presidential statement adopted at Nairobi on 19 November 2004 on institutional relations with the African Union (AU). The goal was to encourage the United Nations to take advantage of the new prospects for cooperation opened up by the creation of the African Union, given its expanded mandate and its new bodies.

Benin thus associated itself with the efforts made by Romania with respect to the adoption of presidential statement S/PRST/2004/27 and resolution 1631 (2005), on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. Indeed, the relationship with the African Union offers an opportunity to implement, in a tangible way, the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter in the spirit of the system of collective security which it established.

We welcome the fact that, pursuant to that resolution, the Secretary-General on 28 July 2006 submitted to the Security Council a very enlightening report on the possibilities and challenges of partnership in the area of security at the regional and global levels. From that perspective, today we have a prime opportunity to assess the progress made in structuring and streamlining cooperation with regional organizations, in particular with the African Union.

Through the establishment of an operational mechanism for conflict prevention and peacekeeping the African Union has clearly shown its determination

to assume greater responsibility in the resolution of crises and conflicts on the continent through an active policy of prevention and stabilization. That commitment makes the African Union a special partner for the Security Council, which devotes so much of its time to questions of peace and security affecting the continent.

My delegation associates itself fully with the analysis contained in the concept paper provided by South Africa, which directs today's debate towards specific questions which require clear responses from us in order to guide the actions of the Security Council and the United Nations. As a key organ, the Security Council is mandated to support the initiatives of regional organizations operating in the area of the maintenance of peace and security. That prerogative of the Security Council must be maintained, since complete independence of regional organizations could lead to the neutralization of world governance. Such a development would not be a stabilizing factor.

It is important that Security Council decisions be taken in close consultation with the States concerned, in order to achieve the full potential for synergy offered by the existence of operational regional organizations. In the context of the African Union, such synergy can best be optimized only through coordination among the various elements of the decision-making hierarchy, with the Security Council taking a decision as a last resort in situations that threaten international peace and security.

In that respect, the strengthening of the relationship between regional organizations and the United Nations can be beneficial only if it is carried out with strict respect for the norms established in Chapter VIII of the Charter. In its resolution 1631 (2005), the Security Council rightly invited regional and subregional organizations that have a capacity for conflict prevention or peacekeeping capacities to place such capacity in the framework of the United Nations Standby Arrangements System.

From that point of view, the United Nations and the African Union should conclude an agreement to make troops available as soon as progress in the establishment of the African Union Standby Force permits. That would create conditions for resolving, in the best possible way, the question of United Nations support for African troop deployment for operations carried out under a United Nations mandate.

My delegation welcomes the November 2006 conclusion of the memorandum of understanding between the United Nations and the African Union on the implementation of the Framework for the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union in various areas, in particular those relating to peace and security.

I wish to remind the Council of the outcome of the seminar held on 15 December 2005 under the chairmanship of Benin, by the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa on the topic of today's debate, with an outstanding intellectual contribution by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission. From among those conclusions I would recall five specific measures aimed at structuring cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union. Those measures are the following: ensuring the connections between the African Union early warning system and the United Nations; mobilizing the financial and logistical resources necessary to fill the crucial gap of means needed for the rapid implementation of decisions; strengthening United Nations capacities in terms of good offices and mediation in order to better support capacities at the regional level; ensuring better coordination among the Security Council, the African Union Peace and Security Council and the competent bodies of the African subregional organizations; and strengthening the African Union's capacity to ensure coordination of subregional peace and security mechanisms on the continent.

I urge the Security Council to consider those proposals for concrete action. They fall within the context of the definition and implementation of a coherent strategic plan for conflict prevention in Africa. In that respect, my delegation urgently appeals for consistent implementation of resolution 1625 (2005) on conflict prevention, in particular in Africa, adopted at the Security Council summit held on 14 September 2005. Full implementation of that resolution requires a change of perspective in terms of the establishment of appropriate capacities. The United Nations and Africa have everything to gain in moving from a culture of reaction to one of proactive prevention.

From that viewpoint, my delegation welcomes the recent appointment by the Secretary-General of a Special Adviser on matters relating to the prevention and resolution of conflict. We are confident that the

renewed commitment of the Security Council, expressed in its presidential statement of 8 January 2007 (S/PRST/2007/1), will be reflected in further concrete acts.

In conclusion, Madam President, my delegation strongly encourages your country resolutely to continue its efforts within the Security Council to strengthen the effectiveness of the cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union in the area of international peace and security.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Rwanda.

Mr. Nsengimana (Rwanda): Allow me first to pay tribute to you, Madam President, and your delegation for organizing this important thematic debate on the relationship between the Security Council and regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. We commend South Africa for its leadership on this issue and for the importance it attaches to it.

The Charter of the United Nations confers a role upon regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security through the pacific settlement of disputes or, as stated in Article 53, enforcement action. Regional organizations also have a role in preventing conflict through early warning mechanisms, as well as in post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery. The Charter commits us all to "unite our strength to maintain international peace and security". By this, we recognize that our collective, united strength, exerted in the maintenance of international peace and security, is greater than the sum of its parts.

There is no doubt that regional organizations, particularly the African Union (AU), play a central role in the maintenance of international peace and security. Regional and subregional organizations have demonstrated the capacity to respond quickly to crises. They also possess vital local knowledge and a good understanding of local sensitivities and cultures.

We commend the African Union and AU troop-contributing countries for their contributions to AU peacekeeping missions in Burundi, Darfur and, more recently, Somalia. Peacekeeping in those places is both difficult and dangerous. However, despite that fact, African States commit troops and resources to peacekeeping out of a genuine political commitment to assist nations and societies in their emergence from conflict towards sustainable peace and security.

The Charter clearly states, in Article 24, that the Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Therefore, as many other speakers have already said, when regional organizations undertake peacekeeping duties they do so on behalf of the Security Council and the broader United Nations membership. It is therefore imperative that we begin to see greater involvement by the broader United Nations membership in peacekeeping operations that are undertaken in its name by regional organizations.

The African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS), to which my country is a major troop contributor, has done a commendable job despite very difficult financial and logistical constraints. Although there has been significant support from various international partners, the Mission has suffered recurring financial crises as well as crippling logistical problems such as a lack of vehicles. The Mission has often been unable to fly its few helicopters because of a lack of fuel. We should not allow this situation to continue.

Some representatives of Member States have said that AMIS is ineffective. We ask them "How can you give AMIS such a difficult task, causing it to work in such difficult physical conditions, deny it adequate resources, and then expect it to be 100 per cent effective? How can you deny peacekeepers the tools to be effective, then fault them for not meeting your expectations?"

It is clear that there is tremendous scope for a closer relationship between the United Nations and the African Union. Specifically, we believe that when the AU undertakes a peacekeeping mission under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, the mission should be funded through United Nations-assessed contributions. In addition, adequate logistical support should be provided to AU peacekeeping operations. That would ensure proper burden-sharing with respect to peacekeeping responsibilities, rather than leaving small countries like Rwanda to do the heavy lifting.

We therefore welcome the preparations, including discussions and extensive consultations with the Sudanese Government, for the establishment of a hybrid mission in Darfur. This may well provide a model for future cooperation and joint peacekeeping operations between the United Nations and regional

organizations. Such joint operations will benefit from the local knowledge and understanding possessed by regional organizations, as well as from international involvement and the participation of the United Nations.

There is also tremendous scope for cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union in institutional, operational and human resource capacity-building in the area of peacekeeping. In that connection, therefore, we welcome the adoption last November of the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union, set out in the declaration entitled "Enhancing UN-AU Cooperation". We look forward to the full implementation of the Programme.

Finally, it is also important for the Security Council to hold frequent meetings with the Peace and Security Council of the AU. Such meetings would provide an opportunity for the regular exchanges of views, lessons learned and other perspectives on issues before both bodies. It would also ensure co-ownership by the African Union of peacekeeping missions.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Liberia.

Mr. Barnes (Liberia): At the outset, Madam President, I would like to join previous speakers in congratulating you and the delegation of South Africa, under whose presidency this debate is being conducted.

My delegation is gratified by the opportunity to participate in this crucial debate on the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, particularly the African Union (AU), in the maintenance of international peace and security. Liberia is a beneficiary of that cooperation, as evidenced by the deployment by the United Nations peacekeeping force which has been largely responsible for maintaining peace and stability in my country. It should be noted that the Liberian experience has given practical meaning to the classic provision of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations and can be seen as a success story of this relationship.

We would like to address three priority areas of concern to the Liberian delegation which, we believe, when implemented, would further enhance the cooperation between the two organizations. First, there is the potential for significant cost savings inherent in the deployment of the AU peacekeeping mechanism and rapid response as opposed to applying immediate solutions from areas outside the continent of Africa. Secondly, response to conflict in a timely manner is better addressed with geographic proximity. Thirdly, there is a philosophical imperative that holds that African problems require African solutions.

With respect to each of the aforementioned factors, the African Union, in order to succeed, must have its capacity expanded. That, we believe, should be the underpinning objective of United Nations-AU cooperation.

It is an established fact that one of the underlying causes of conflict and strife on the African continent is poverty. It is therefore the fervent belief of the Liberian delegation that the most effective solution to poverty reduction and conflict is sustained capacity-building. A valuable lesson learned from our national crisis is that solid cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations should be anchored by a cohesive capacity-building mechanism. We view that as the best solution in preventing conflict and adequately addressing the problems of poverty and development in Africa, even as we expand our efforts in Darfur and Somalia.

We pray that, as this institution re-engineers itself in the light of the multifaceted issues of globalization, the approach of building sustainable capacity to reduce poverty and conflict will be its guiding principle.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Algeria.

Mr. Yousfi (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): Madam President, allow me first of all to warmly welcome you here to New York and to say how honoured we are to see you presiding over today's meeting. This is proof of the importance that your country, South Africa, attaches to the issues of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in the area of international peace and security. I take this opportunity also to welcome Mr. Said Djinnit, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union (AU).

I am grateful to your delegation for having given us an opportunity to participate in this debate, which is very timely and extremely important. I also welcome your desire to steer this debate in a new direction, as seen in the terms of reference that you kindly submitted. We share your desire and your ambition to

bring a fresh perspective to cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations and to give it a new framework that is based on the dynamic and evolving interpretation of Chapter VIII of the Charter and that takes into account new realities.

We are convinced that the time has come to build a new partnership with the African Union, in particular, that goes beyond the simple recognition of sacrifices it makes on behalf of the international community and that complements the role of this Council, when it does not replace it, in the maintenance of peace and the management of conflicts in our continent. The dynamic that has been created thanks to, in particular, the creation of the AU Peace and Security Council and the expansion of the responsibilities of AU Commission, has rendered somewhat obsolete the approach and the framework that still govern cooperation between the two organizations.

We should thus enter a new phase in strengthening the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations. In the case of the African Union, we should strive to strengthen the benefits of this cooperation and to broaden its horizons. We welcome the fact that the relationship between the United Nations and the AU has become more intense over the last few years. Coordination and consultation between the secretariats of both organizations and between the Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council in particular have further expanded. This is undeniably a very positive development that should be encouraged.

We also welcome the fact that the Security Council takes into account more or less systematically the viewpoint and the decisions of the African Union and those of its subregional organizations in the decisions it must take relating to African conflicts before it. This is especially the case with regard to Darfur, Côte d'Ivoire and Somalia. This close cooperation is likely to make the international community's action more effective, since it will strengthen the political and moral authority of its decisions. By acting in this way, the two organizations reinforce each other in the interests of the peace and stability of our continent.

However, we are obliged to note that the established mechanisms for cooperation that operate at the moment are lagging behind the political commitments undertaken, particularly at the global summit and in other United Nations decisions, since they do not always express a will for sharing the tasks that is based on the principles of complementarity and comparative advantage. The Security Council's hesitation stands out against the voluntary action displayed by the African Union and its member States.

We are not talking about reducing the Council's primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and for political management of peace operations. What we are talking about is a clear, coherent doctrine, separate from ad hoc solutions, which are based on reciprocal commitments. Once the Security Council authorizes a peacekeeping operation, that operation must be treated as a United Nations operation and, in that capacity, eligible for logistical and financial support under the United Nations budget. Accepting such a principle would open the way for a series of political, legal and operational adjustments that the United Nations and the African Union could decide on together. The details of these arrangements may be difficult, but the task is not insurmountable, provided that the political will exists.

Indeed, by exploring the concept of a hybrid operation in the case of Darfur, the United Nations and the African Union will be taking a big step in this direction. Somalia also constitutes an opportunity that could have been explored to seek innovative solutions. The AU and African countries, including Algeria, have taken risks so that peace can finally return to that country, and they are waiting for the international community to assume its responsibilities.

Moreover, in observing the cooperation that has been set up between the African Union and the United Nations, one can see that a division of labour has de facto been established. African missions, frequently deployed on an urgent basis, are relieved by United Nations Blue Helmets, since the AU has neither the means nor the expertise to maintain or manage multidimensional and complex operations. Thus, it is important that the international community, the United Nations and donor countries focus their efforts on strengthening Africa's capacities for mediation and conflict prevention upstream and on rapid intervention downstream. One area of priority action concerns the Standby Force that the African Union is planning to set up by the year 2010.

I will conclude by stressing that updating instruments of cooperation between the United Nations

and regional organizations, and the African Union in particular, is necessary, because reality is evolving much more quickly than our practices. We hope that this debate will be a starting point for thinking about the best ways to achieve this objective. However, this is a question that is global in nature and thus goes beyond the competences of the Security Council. Thus, the General Assembly, in consultation with regional organizations, must take up this problem, for it alone is empowered to decide on the political, legal and budgetary framework for which the Security Council and the Secretariat will give it responsibility, each in its respective area.

The President: I shall now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Yahya Mahmassani, Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States.

Mr. Mahmassani (League of Arab States) (*spoke in Arabic*): Madam President, first may I congratulate you on assuming the presidency of the Security Council. I very much welcome all the efforts by South Africa for the Council's work this month. I am particularly grateful for the invitation to attend this meeting, and I would like to thank you for the document that you distributed containing the concept paper for this discussion; it has been a very useful basis for this debate. We very much hope that we will be able to achieve a positive outcome. That will help to promote cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

I consider important the horizontal cooperation among regional organizations and the League of Arab States. The Arab League has a privileged relationship with the African Union, since eighty per cent of its citizens live on the African continent. Fifty per cent of the Arab League members are also members of the AU, and one fifth of the members of the AU are members of the Arab League. So it is a very specific situation and demonstrates the advantages of the horizontal cooperation between the two organizations.

The great challenges at the beginning of the twenty-first century have pushed us to promote the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations. On the basis of that principle, the African Union and the League of Arab States are working to develop African and Arab relations. We base this on positive and realistic elements that take into account the joint strategic interests of the two organizations. We are doing so in close cooperation with the United Nations, in particular the Security Council, with a view to resolving conflict, promoting international peace and security and ensuring stability and development.

On the basis of the shared responsibility of the United Nations and regional organizations for the maintenance of international peace and security, the League of Arab States and the African Union — given their geographic location and the situation of their peoples — are cooperating closely and taking positive steps to resolve Arab and African problems. That cooperation has proved effective in helping to resolve various crises.

We are trying to ensure security and stability in the Arab world as a whole. Our cooperation is evident in particular in the peace negotiations in the Sudan and in the context of our joint efforts to resolve the crisis in Darfur, as well as to ensure security and stability in Somalia. This reflects the tripartite cooperation among the United Nations, the League of Arab States and the African Union.

The primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security lies with the Security Council. However, it goes without saying that cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is one of the most important factors. That is obvious, and it has been taken into account in the various policies adopted by the African Union and the League of Arab States. Those two organizations play an effective and positive role in resolving regional conflict through the adoption of measures aimed at ensuring peace.

International peace and security must be guaranteed by international law, and we hope that the promotion of cooperation among the United Nations, the African Union and our organization will have a positive impact on international peace and security.

We must take into account international law, recommendations and resolutions, and provide the technical and logistical support required to carry out the tasks assigned to us. The Security Council must recognize the resolutions adopted by regional organizations and promote the role of those organizations. The Security Council should turn to them and involve them in conflict resolution. The African Union and the League of Arab States can be at the forefront in playing a positive role in this respect.

In this context, the 2005 World Summit Outcome reaffirmed the need for an effective partnership between the Security Council and regional organizations so that we can step in quickly to try to resolve conflicts and crises. We therefore support regional mediation efforts aimed at the peaceful resolution of conflicts at the regional and international levels.

In the context of the institutional relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, the African Union and the League of Arab States are working to promote better coordination among regional mechanisms to achieve peace and security, sustainable development and the eradication of poverty in Africa as a part of the New Partnership for Africa's Development. In this context, the League of Arab States reaffirms the importance of cooperating with the African Union and providing it with the support that it requires to face up to new challenges, especially in the area of collective security measures, so that it can respond effectively and rapidly.

It is important to put in place an effective conflict prevention mechanism in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter. The report of the high-level meeting between the United Nations and regional and other intergovernmental organizations gives new impetus to the promotion of international peace and security, which will require greater cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. It does without saying that cooperation between the Security Council and regional organizations and the coordination of joint efforts will have a tangible impact in terms of achieving security and regional and international stability.

The President: I give the floor to the Permanent Observer of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Mr. Abdul Wahab: It is, indeed, a great pleasure and honour for my delegation to address the Security Council under the presidency of South Africa. My delegation would like to thank the presidency and Council members for the kind invitation extended to the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) to participate in this important meeting.

In December 2005, the OIC adopted a New Vision and outlined a Ten-Year Programme of Action. The list of priorities in the Plan of Action includes multilateral cooperation with regional and other intergovernmental organizations to promote common objectives.

Africa is central to the concerns of the OIC. Twenty-seven member countries, comprising nearly half of the OIC's membership, are from the African continent. They are integral to the aspirations of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Consequently, the advancement of the OIC is inextricably linked to enhancing the development of the African region. In this regard, a Poverty Alleviation Fund was established in 2006 by the Islamic Development Bank — a specialized agency of the OIC — which has targeted initial capital of $10 billion to enhance the capacities of the least developed member States. The focus, of course, will be on African least developed countries.

The OIC fully supports and welcomes the initiative to develop a plan for African regional and subregional organizations, particularly with regard to strengthening cooperation to develop the capacities of the African countries and the African Union in peacebuilding and conflict management.

Despite severe limitations, the African Union has played an admirable role in multiple peacekeeping operations on the African continent. The OIC appreciates the support of brotherly States that have contributed to those endeavours.

For its part, the OIC has been playing an active role in mediating and defusing conflicts in several places in Asia and Africa. Additionally, the OIC and the Islamic Development Bank would like to develop closer coordination with the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission.

The humanitarian impact of an unresolved conflict crosses not only borders but also continents. The OIC believes that the essential lesson that must be learned is that peacebuilding and conflict management require political engagement and the bolstering of the tried and true policy of multilateralism.

There exists a unique window of opportunity for cooperation among the OIC, the United Nations and the African Union. The OIC stands ready to promote multifaceted cooperation with the United Nations, the African Union and other relevant regional and intergovernmental organizations.

The President: After consultations among the members of the Security Council, I have been

authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council.

"The Security Council reaffirms its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

"The Security Council recognizes the important role of regional organizations in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as its relevant resolutions and presidential statements, in particular resolutions 1625 (2005) and 1631 (2005) and presidential statement S/PRST/2006/39. In this respect, the Security Council recalls that cooperation between the United Nations and the regional arrangements in matters relating to the maintenance of peace and security, as are appropriate for regional action, is an integral part of collective security as provided for in the Charter of the United Nations.

"The Security Council recalls the relevant paragraphs of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document (General Assembly resolution 60/1), in particular the support expressed for the development and implementation of a 10-year capacity plan to enhance Africa's peacekeeping capacity, and welcomes the signing, in November 2006, of the Declaration on Enhancing UN-AU Cooperation between the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union in the field of peace and security (A/61/630).

"The Security Council also recalls its presidential statements made in Nairobi in 2004 (S/PRST/2004/44) and in New York on 20 September 2006 (S/PRST/2006/39), where it expressed its intention to consider further steps to promote closer and more operational cooperation between the United Nations and regional, subregional and other intergovernmental organizations in the field of conflict prevention, peacebuilding and peacekeeping, and acknowledges the important role played by them in the brokering of peace agreements in conflict situations. The Security Council also welcomes recent developments with regard to the cooperation between the United Nations, the African Union and the European Union.

"The Security Council welcomes the growing contribution being made by the African Union and the resolve of its leaders to address and solve the conflicts on the African continent. The Security Council stresses, in accordance with Article 54 of the Charter of the United Nations, the need for the African Union at all times to keep the Security Council fully informed of these efforts in a comprehensive and coordinated manner.

"The Security Council recognizes that regional organizations are well positioned to understand the root causes of many conflicts closer to home and to influence the prevention or resolution, owing to their knowledge of the region.

"The Security Council urges the Secretary-General, in consultation and in cooperation with the relevant regional and subregional bodies, to resolve regional conflicts in Africa by using existing United Nations capacities as effectively as possible; to support regional early warning and mediation, in particular in Africa; assess the risk of conflict at regional level and prioritize those areas of highest risk; and highlight possible methods at a regional level in combating illegal exploitation and trafficking of natural resources.

"The Security Council stresses that common and co-coordinated efforts undertaken by the United Nations and regional organizations in matters of peace and security should be based on their complementary capacities and comparative advantages, making full use of their experience, in accordance with the United Nations Charter and the relevant statutes of the regional organizations. In this regard, the Council recognizes the need to build capacities with regional organizations so as to improve our collective effectiveness in the maintenance of international peace and security. The Security Council recognizes the Peacebuilding Commission as a forum for coordination between the United Nations system and regional and subregional organizations.

"The Security Council invites further collaboration with the Peace and Security Council

of the African Union in order to help build the latter's capacity to undertake, inter alia, rapid and appropriate responses to emerging situations and to develop effective strategies for conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The Security Council recognizes that in some cases, the African Union may be authorized by the Security Council to deal with collective security challenges on the African continent. In this connection, the Security Council encourages increased exchange of information and sharing of experience, best practices and lessons learned between the Security Council and the African Union as well as other relevant regional organizations.

"Emphasizing the primacy of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council stresses the importance of supporting and improving in a sustained way the resource base and capacity of the African Union. The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to provide a report, in consultation with the relevant regional organizations, in particular the African Union, on specific proposals on how the United Nations can better support arrangements for further cooperation and coordination with regional organizations on Chapter VIII arrangements in order to contribute significantly to the common security challenges in the areas of concern and to promote the deepening and broadening of dialogue and cooperation between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2007/7.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.